

WE-TOGETHER

England & Wales · Charity number 1196883

Details

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2021-12-02

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address 67 Kingston Deverill
Warminster
Wiltshire
BA12 7HG

Phone 07913636544

Email info@we-together.co.uk

Website <https://we-together.co.uk/>

Activities

Objects: 1. THE PREVENTION OF CRIME AND TO FACILITATE THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE BY THE PROVISION OF AN ANONYMISED DATABASE FOR THE RECORDING OF SEXUAL ABUSE AND HISTORIC ABUSE TO ESTABLISH PATTERNS THAT CAN IDENTIFY POTENTIAL SERIAL ABUSERS2.THE RELIEF OF SUFFERING OF THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE BY THE PROVISION OF:A)INFORMATION ON THE HEALTH ISSUES, BOTH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL, ASSOCIATED WITH SEXUAL ABUSE.B)INFORMATION ON, AND LINKS TO, ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS THAT CAN OFFER SUPPORT TO RELIEVE THE MENTAL AND PHYSICAL SICKNESS OF VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE.

Activities: We-Together's aim is to realise a permanent, meaningful increase in the conviction rate of sexual offenders across England and Wales. It will do this by using a unique technological solution to identify serial predators. This will increase reporting by victims, and increase the likelihood of identifying and prosecuting serial perpetrators.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, Human Rights/religious Or Racial Harmony/equality Or Diversity
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£609	£2,275	-	-
2024-03-31	£8,517	£3,306	-	-
2023-03-31	£8,049	£1,503	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Dr Judith Frances Miller	Chair	2019-03-19
Alison Claire Bengé		2019-03-19
Dr Chitra Balakrishna		2023-12-01
Dr Eleanor Charlotte Neyroud		2025-02-01
Geoffrey Richard Bengé		2019-03-19
James Richard De Villeneuve Kidwell		2022-01-14
Perry Power		2022-09-06
Simon Peter Spence KC		2025-10-01

WE-TOGETHER

England & Wales - Charity number 1196883

Accounts

Annual Report for We-Together

UK registered charity number 1196883

Period from inception to 31 March 2025

Who we are

We Together is the brainchild of one of our trustees who was raped by her piano teacher when she was 14. In court, it was her word against his and the jury failed to convict. Another victim of that piano teacher went to court some years previously, and similarly, the piano teacher was acquitted. Had the victims gone to court together his acquittal was less likely to have happened.

Our trustee's traumatic experience in her youth, exacerbated by facing her rapist in court in later life, exemplifies the systemic flaws that perpetuate the shockingly low conviction rates for sexual violence. Many survivors share this painful journey feeling isolated and unheard. There is a pressing need for a new approach.

Our mission is to significantly improve the conviction rate for sexual offences by the use of digital analytics, collaborating with the police and criminal justice agencies to identify and prosecute perpetrators.

What do we want to address

“The victims of rape must carry their memories with them for the rest of their lives. They must not also carry the burden of silence and shame.”¹

Currently the conviction rate for sexual offences is low – just 2% of reported rapes are even charged. There is a ‘confidence deficit’ in the criminal justice system which We-Together wants to help address. We recognise that despite the fact that sexual violence is becoming normalised in the UK, there are lasting, life-changing consequences for many survivors. We want to help create a meaningful improvement in securing justice for victims of Sexual crime.

Our proposal

We are developing a digital platform which will allow victims to report an act, or acts, of sexual violence in a safe and secure way. Using digital analytics, our platform will ensure that where a cluster of reports emerges around a single perpetrator, that information will be supplied to The Hydrant Programme, with whom we are already in partnership. Hydrant will then disseminate the information to the appropriate force for investigation. In this way, no single victim would need to face the criminal justice process alone.

Anonymous reporting systems exist in other areas, but there are none that can triangulate data to identify multiple victims and clusters of offences. For example, the Sexual Assault Report Anonymously (SARA) system in Australia sends summaries of anonymous data to the police to identify trends and target problem areas but does not allow for clustering of individual reports.

¹ Raine, N.V. *After Silence: Rape and my Journey Back*. London: Virago. 1999. p.6.

Our platform is different: it triangulates information about perpetrators to identify a pattern of reported incidents. This approach will allow the police and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to take action sooner, which not only contributes to the effectiveness of the criminal justice system in responding to offences, but has the additional advantage of preventing escalation of offending behaviour by perpetrators.

The We-Together platform will provide survivors of sexual abuse with an accessible and secure platform for engagement. Upon visiting the site, users will complete a simple, structured questionnaire about their experiences in confidence. An embedded "panic" button has been implemented as a safeguard mechanism, allowing users to swiftly conceal page contents and redirect to a neutral site, reinforcing the platform's commitment to preserving user privacy and security.

The platform is designed to facilitate user engagement in a secure and uncomplicated manner, prioritising user empowerment. Notably, the implementation of the "panic" button and the prohibition on post-submission editing underscore the platform's commitment to safeguarding user information. The overarching objective is to establish an environment wherein survivors feel safe enough to share their experiences while ensuring their privacy is rigorously upheld.

We are committed to working closely and collaboratively with law enforcement. This is why we held extensive discussion with The Hydrant Programme and have partnered with them. Although we are emphatically not a support service, our working methods are entirely survivor-driven, and therefore sensitive to the issues which arise. In addition, our platform will link survivors with information about support services in their area, and we have a referrals area on our website which will be constantly updated.

We are seeking capital funding at this time to develop and test our platform. The idea is that we have a 3-phase project, with co-production from survivors (our User Testing Group) built into each phase.

Phase 1 – Pathfinder

The aim of the Pathfinder Phase is to develop our 'proof of concept'. This will be a version of the system that we can use to test the interface of the system and work with survivors to test the system. This version will test dummy variables and the ability to send notifications of clusters. This will also allow us to see what additional aspects we will need to include in the full version of the platform – for example, writing in additional AI ability to enhance the reassurance to survivors.

Phase 2 – Pilot

We will test the platform in a full pilot. The platform will be further developed to take account of the Pathfinder findings but will include: reinforcement of security features; the questions will be refined, making the user experience more focussed and secure; and it will be accessible on phone and desktop browsers. An administrative website will also be created allowing for viewing statistics and contents without the ability to decrypt sensitive information – to allow for research and evaluation. We are fortunate to have trustees and advisors from the University of Cambridge Criminology Department and the Open University Cybersecurity Department working with us at every stage of the project.

Phase 3 – Rollout

The rollout phase will build on the previous two phases, making adjustments based on user and advisory feedback. The platform will be rolled out nationwide.

Outcomes

We envision a future where the outcomes of increased reporting and renewed confidence in the criminal justice system lead to transformative changes in the lives of survivors, and a change in attitude to sexual violence in society. Together, we will help create a justice system that is more responsive, where survivors feel supported and empowered, and where there is a cultural shift towards increased accountability for sexual offences.



The key outcome is that We-Together’s platform will support achieving justice for far more victims of sexual crime than is currently the case. This is its primary objective, in relation to which all other potential benefits are secondary. While justice remains the central focus, the broader social impact may be immense.

Effective prosecution in England and Wales would alleviate the strain on already over-stretched mental health services, as victims are more likely to experience full recovery when perpetrators are held accountable. This not only reduces the risk of suicide but also enhances overall emotional well-being, potentially alleviating the burden on counselling resources.

Furthermore, an increase in conviction rates serves as a deterrent, fostering a safer environment for potential victims and contributing to an overall decline in the impunity of perpetrators, thereby inducing a cultural shift. We-Together's collaboration with law enforcement is pivotal in not only supporting their efforts but also in bolstering public confidence, particularly in a climate where the reputation of UK police services, especially regarding women's safety, is currently somewhat battered.

Funding and Resource Needs

Our funding needs currently are for a Capital project to continue to develop the platform. We are currently seeking - £100k for the pathfinder project, which will allow us to approach a wider range of funders for the next rollout stages. We have raised almost £20,000 so far, with £10,000 of that match funding. We have also received pro-bono support from a cutting-edge Cambridge-based IT company to develop the initial elements of the platform and for ensuring we have a robust approach to safeguarding and data protection.

By supporting We-Together, you are not just funding a platform; you are investing in a movement. Your contribution has the power to break the silence, offer solace to survivors, and reshape the landscape of justice for victims of sexual crime. Join us in this crucial mission and let us build a future where justice is not a rarity but a right for all. Together, we can redefine outcomes and build a society where no one faces the aftermath of sexual violence alone. Your support goes beyond statistics; it touches the lives of individuals on a path to healing and empowerment.

Activities and Achievements during the year

The trustees have been working on various sub-projects in support of the main aim and have achieved the following:

- The detailed design (question flow) of the platform including the appointment of a highly experienced trustee responsible for technology.
- Review of legal and regulatory requirements applicable to data collection, storage and dissemination.
- Refinement of platform architecture to deal with the legal and regulatory requirements.
- Establishing links with the Police through the Hydrant Programme.

Trustees

The charity was established on 19 March 2019 when the founding trustees were appointed. Limited activity took place during the pandemic.

Chitra Balakrishna, Trustee responsible for technology (Appointed 1 December 2023)

Alison Benge, Founding Trustee and Secretary to the Board (Appointed 19 March 2019)

Geoff Benge, Founding Trustee (Appointed 19 March 2019)

James Kidwell, Trustee – Treasurer (Appointed 14 January 2022)

Dr Judith Miller, Chairman and Trustee responsible for co-ordinating external advisors and support network (Appointed 19 March 2019)

Dr Eleanor Neyroud, Trustee responsible for survivor support group and questionnaire design (Appointed 1 January 2025)

Perry Power, Trustee responsible for the Charity's Social Media presence (Appointed 6 September 2022)

Trustee Board and Governance

The Trustee Board is the governing body of the charity and will be responsible for taking all major decisions affecting the direction and control of the charity.

Matters requiring the consultation and approval of all Trustees are as follows:

- Appointment and removal of trustees
- Appointment of advisors and ambassadors
- The Annual accounts of the charity
- The Budget forecast of the charity
- The policies of the Charity (e.g. Safeguarding)
- Any significant items of expenditure or commitments (e.g financial leases)
- Any significant publicity statements

Trustee Board meetings

The Trustee Board aims to meet at least once per month. Meetings may take place by means of a conference or video call.

The Chairman will send all trustees an agenda prior to each meeting and the Secretary will prepare brief minutes of the meeting which reflect the actions agreed and decisions taken at the meeting.

From time to time the Board may delegate responsibility to an individual or a smaller working party to complete a task (e.g. victim questionnaire design and fund raising).

Financial management

The charity is run on the basis that all trustees and advisors are providing their services pro bono. Reasonable expenses incurred on behalf of the charity will be reimbursed.

The charity expects to incur capital expenditure in respect of the construction of the database and the trustees are working with a software development company, based in Cambridge.

The charity expects to incur operating expenses in relation to database hosting, web site maintenance, professional services in relation to accounting and registration, promotion (social media and other), appropriate insurances and the cost of holding meetings.

As part of its fundraising initiatives, the charity has set up a GoFundMe account which aims to crowdfund part of its operating cost requirement. It is also the mechanism through which visitors to the web site may contribute.

The Chairman and Treasurer are empowered to approve and pay all day-to-day expenditures.

Other information pertaining to the charity

Registered address: 67 Kingston Deverill, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 7HG

Web site: <https://we-together.co.uk/>

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/we-togetheruk/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/wetogetheruk/>

Email: info@we-together.co.uk

GoFundMe: We-Together

Bankers: Lloyds Bank

We-Together (Registered charity number 1196883)

Financial Statements for the period from inception to 31 March 2025

The Financial Statements are prepared on the basis of the Statement of Recognised Practice (SORP) for smaller charities.

Receipts and payments account

Year ended	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2024 £
	Unrestricted	Total	Unrestricted	Total
	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
Receipts				
Voluntary receipts	609	609	8,517	8,517
Total receipts	609	609	8,517	8,517
Payments				
Governance and administrative expenses	1,675	1,675	1,211	1,211
Promotional material costs and fund raising expenses	600	600	1,608	1,608
Web site	-	-	217	217
Total payments	2,275	2,275	3,306	3,306
Excess of (payments) over receipts	(1,666)	(1,666)	5,482	5,482
Bank account balance as at 31 March 2025 & 2024	10,362	10,362	12,028	12,028

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

As At:	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2024 £
	Unrestricted	Total	Unrestricted	Total
	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
Cash Funds				
Bank current account	10,362	10,362	12,028	12,028
Total assets	10,362	10,362	12,028	12,028
Liabilities	-	-	-	-
Net assets available to the charity	10,362	10,362	12,028	12,028

WE-TOGETHER

England & Wales - Charity number 1196883

Accounts

Annual Report for We-Together

UK registered charity number 1196883

Period from inception to 31 March 2024

Mission

Our mission is to significantly improve the conviction rate for sexual offences by empowering survivors to speak up, fostering a sense of community, and collaborating with police and criminal justice agencies to identify and prosecute perpetrators. Currently, fewer than 3% of reported rapes result in charges, highlighting a critical confidence deficit in the criminal justice system that perpetuates silence and injustice.

The Problem We Are Addressing

“The victims of rape must carry their memories with them for the rest of their lives. They must not also carry the burden of silence and shame.” (Raine, 1998).

The process of bringing a sexual criminal to justice begins with reporting, and there are many reasons why victims choose not to report: shame; denial and minimisation; fear of the consequences; low self-esteem; feelings of helplessness; a history of being sexually victimised; or indeed disbelief that abuse actually took place (e.g., if the victim was drugged at the time). Thus, although there has been a real increase over recent years in the number of offences reported to the police, there remains a very real discrepancy between this number compared to the crime-survey data.

However, reporting is only the initial stage of the process of bringing a sexual criminal to justice. The second step in increasing conviction-rates is to improve the number and effectiveness of police investigations into reported offences. Incredibly, the number of Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) cases being referred by the police to the CPS is declining. Of those referred, the CPS has charged a falling proportion of cases across the three years 2016–19. In rape-flagged cases, the number of receipts has decreased from 6,611 in the year ending March 2017 to 5,114 in the year ending March 2019 – a 22.6% decrease. Of those cases received from the police, the number of cases the CPS prosecutes has decreased from 3,671 to 1,758 (a 52.1% decrease). In 2019 more than 20,000 women decided not to proceed with a rape investigation, even when the suspect had been identified.

There are additional obstacles to the CPS going forward with prosecution. Among these are lack of investigative resources, the time needed to reach a decision, the withdrawal of the complaint (as already noted) and formalised conviction-targets.

However, by far the most salient reason for low prosecution-rates is lack of evidence. By its very nature, sexual assault often does not produce any physical evidence or corroborating witnesses. Without such evidence, and with the only evidence coming from the victim, police will often consider that there is insufficient evidence to proceed with a prosecution. Crucially, current procedures do not normally allow the disclosure of a suspect’s details and therefore it is not possible to identify other potential victims. However, in a number of high profile cases where there have been multiple victims, it has been possible for patterns of abuse to be

identified by the police, leading to successful identification and prosecution, where individual accusations at a much earlier stage failed. We are facing a crisis of confidence among sexual abuse victims who do not believe there is any prospect of justice within the current system. This is one important reason why they often do not report offences to the police. When they do, there is only a small likelihood of any subsequent investigation resulting in the CPS prosecuting the case. And when prosecution takes place, juries will often return a not-guilty verdict. It is one person's word against another. A technological solution is needed which addresses both of the problems – low reporting and lack of evidence. These together allow thousands of sexual criminals to evade justice.

Our Solution: A New Platform for Justice

We-Together is developing a secure digital platform that allows survivors to report their experiences of sexual violence safely. Our platform will identify a cluster of victim-survivors with a common perpetrator. The cluster will then be reported to The Hydrant Programme who will disseminate the information to the relevant police force for investigation.

Key features of our platform include:

- **Privacy and security:** Survivors can report securely and confidentially or using a simple interface. These details will only be released to the police if a cluster is identified.
- **User Empowerment:** A "panic" button is embedded to protect privacy, and no post-submission edits are allowed to safeguard sensitive data.
- **Support Integration:** Links to support services and resources for survivors. Although our mission does not include support provision, we do think that sign posting to relevant services is essential.

We have been survivor led at every stage of our evolution and have formed a survivor group, led by one of our trustees with lived experience. The group was closely involved with the design of the platform, ensuring that it meets the needs of users. We have also worked with GDPR experts and the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) to ensure that perpetrators can be legally named to the police when clusters are identified.

Project Phases and Outcomes

Our project is being developed in three phases:

1. **Phase 1 – Pathfinder:** Testing a proof of concept with specialist partners and survivors, incorporating feedback from the survivor group to refine the platform.
2. **Phase 2 – Pilot:** Refining the platform in a pilot area with enhanced security and usability features, informed by ongoing collaboration with survivors and law enforcement.
3. **Phase 3 – Rollout:** Launch in England & Wales with adjustments based on user feedback and advisory recommendations.

Activities and Achievements during the year

The trustees have been working on various sub-projects in support of the main aim and have achieved the following:

- Establishment of a Survivor group to guide the detailed construction (question flow) of the platform.
- Appointment of a highly experienced trustee responsible for technology.
- Review of legal and regulatory requirements applicable to data collection, storage and dissemination.
- Refinement of platform architecture to deal with the legal and regulatory requirements.
- Establishing links with the Police through the Hydrant Programme.

Trustees

The charity was established on 19 March 2019 when the founding trustees were appointed. Limited activity took place during the pandemic.

Chitra Balakrishna, Trustee responsible for technology (Appointed 1 December 2023)

Alison Benge, Founding Trustee and Secretary to the Board (Appointed 19 March 2019)

Geoff Benge, Founding Trustee (Appointed 19 March 2019)

James Kidwell, Trustee – Treasurer (Appointed 14 January 2022)

Dr Judith Miller, Chairman and Trustee responsible for co-ordinating external advisors and support network (Appointed 19 March 2019)

Perry Power, Trustee responsible for the Charity's Social Media presence (Appointed 6 September 2022)

Trustee Board and Governance

The Trustee Board is the governing body of the charity and will be responsible for taking all major decisions affecting the direction and control of the charity.

Matters requiring the consultation and approval of all Trustees are as follows:

- Appointment and removal of trustees
- Appointment of advisors and ambassadors
- The Annual accounts of the charity
- The Budget forecast of the charity
- The policies of the Charity (e.g. Safeguarding)
- Any significant items of expenditure or commitments (e.g financial leases)
- Any significant publicity statements

Trustee Board meetings

The Trustee Board aims to meet at least once per month. Meetings may take place by means of a conference or video call.

The secretary will send all trustees an agenda prior to each meeting and will prepare brief minutes of the meeting which reflect the actions agreed and decisions taken at the meeting.

From time to time the Board may delegate responsibility to an individual or a smaller working party to complete a task (e.g. Social media, marketing material, meetings with advisors).

Financial management

The charity is run on the basis that all trustees and advisors are providing their services pro bono. Reasonable expenses incurred on behalf of the charity will be reimbursed.

The charity expects to incur capital expenditure in respect of the construction of the database and the trustees are working with a software development company, based in Cambridge.

The charity expects to incur operating expenses in relation to database hosting, web site maintenance, professional services in relation to accounting and registration, promotion (social media and other), appropriate insurances and the cost of holding meetings.

As part of its fundraising initiatives, the charity has set up a GoFundMe account which aims to crowdfund part of its operating cost requirement. It is also the mechanism through which visitors to the web site may contribute.

The Chairman and Treasurer are empowered to approve and pay all day-to-day expenditures.

Other information pertaining to the charity

Registered address: 67 Kingston Deverill, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 7HG

Web site: <https://we-together.co.uk/>

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/we-togetheruk/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/wetogetheruk/>

Email: info@we-together.co.uk

GoFundMe: We-Together

Bankers: Lloyds Bank

We-Together (Registered charity number 1196883)

Financial Statements for the period from inception to 31 March 2024

The Financial Statements are prepared on the basis of the Statement of Recognised Practice (SORP) for smaller charities.

Receipts and payments account

Year ended	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2023 £
	Unrestricted	Total	Unrestricted	Total
	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
Receipts				
Voluntary receipts	8,517	8,517	8,049	8,049
Total receipts	8,517	8,517	8,049	8,049
Payments				
Governance and administrative expenses	1,211	1,211	1,045	1,045
Promotional material costs and fund raising expenses	1,608	1,608	388	388
Web site	217	217	70	70
Total payments	3,306	3,306	1,503	1,503
Excess of receipts over payments	5,482	5,482	6,546	6,546
Bank account balance as at 31 March 2024 & 2023	12,028	12,028	6,546	6,546

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

As At:	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2023 £
	Unrestricted	Total	Unrestricted	Total
	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
Cash Funds				
Bank current account	12,028	12,028	6,546	6,546
Total assets	12,028	12,028	6,546	6,546
Liabilities	-	-	-	-
Net assets available to the charity	12,028	12,028	6,546	6,546

WE-TOGETHER

England & Wales - Charity number 1196883

Accounts

Annual Report for We-Together

UK registered charity number 1196883

Period from inception to 31 March 2023

Mission Statement

We-Together's aim is to realise a permanent, meaningful increase in the conviction rate of sexual offenders across England and Wales. We aim to do this by using a unique technological solution to identify serial predators. This will increase reporting by victims, and increase the likelihood of identifying and prosecuting serial perpetrators.

The Extent of Sexual Offending

The failure of the United Kingdom's criminal justice system to hold to account perpetrators of rape and other forms of sexual assault is apparent. If any six women gather together, statistically one of them will have survived raped. It would need a meeting of 62 rapists to find one who had been convicted of the rape of an adult female. The figures are even worse for other types of sexual abuse, including where the victim identifies as male or is underage. That is the imbalance between victim and perpetrator. By definition, sexual crime is shrouded in secrecy and shame. Victims tend not to report it to the police, and even when they do there's often no physical evidence. The police have a thankless task.

Even if assault does not result in physical injury, the psychological impact can be severe and victims may take a long time to recover. The psychological effect of sexual assault varies widely between individuals – what would be minor assault to one person can be severely traumatising to another. We shouldn't underestimate the traumatic effect of even apparently superficial minor assault on an individual.

Many victims never recover fully. Studies indicate that victims of sexual assault form a large, if not the largest, proportion of people suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Complex PTSD. Studies show a statistically significant association between sexual abuse and a range of life-long diagnoses including: anxiety, eating, and sleep disorders, together with a significant increase in the risk of suicide.

The most widely accepted data is that produced by the Office for National Statistics Crime Survey for England and Wales. The data showed that for 2018-2019 2.9% of adults experienced sexual assault. This is very similar to the ONS published data for 2016-2017 where it was reported that 3.1% of women and 0.8% of men experienced sexual assault. These figures equate to 510,000 women and 138,000 men sexually assaulted as adults in a single year. These numbers are far greater than the number reported to the police, although this has increased to a record high of 40,572 women in the year ending September 2021. The numbers speak for themselves. A fundamental renovation of our approach to sexual crime is necessary, and cannot be delayed.

Why Prosecution Rates are Low

The process of bringing a sexual criminal to justice begins with reporting, and there are many reasons why victims choose not to report: shame; denial and minimisation; fear of

the consequences; low self-esteem; feelings of helplessness; a history of being sexually victimised; or indeed disbelief that abuse actually took place (e.g., if the victim was drugged at the time). Thus, although there has been a real increase over recent years in the number of offences reported to the police, there remains a very real discrepancy between this number compared to the crime-survey data.

However, reporting is only the initial stage of the process of bringing a sexual criminal to justice. The second step in increasing conviction-rates is to improve the number and effectiveness of police investigations into reported offences. Incredibly, the number of Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) cases being referred by the police to the CPS is declining. Of those referred, the CPS has charged a falling proportion of cases across the three years 2016–19. In rape-flagged cases, the number of receipts has decreased from 6,611 in the year ending March 2017 to 5,114 in the year ending March 2019 – a 22.6% decrease. Of those cases received from the police, the number of cases the CPS prosecutes has decreased from 3,671 to 1,758 (a 52.1% decrease). In 2019 more than 20,000 women decided not to proceed with a rape investigation, even when the suspect had been identified.

There are additional obstacles to the CPS going forward with prosecution. Among these are lack of investigative resources, the time needed to reach a decision, the withdrawal of the complaint (as already noted) and formalised conviction-targets.

However, by far the most salient reason for low prosecution-rates is lack of evidence. By its very nature, sexual assault often does not produce any physical evidence or corroborating witnesses. Without such evidence, and with the only evidence coming from the victim, police will often consider that there is insufficient evidence to proceed with a prosecution. Crucially, current procedures do not normally allow the disclosure of a suspect's details and therefore it is not possible to identify other potential victims. However, in a number of high profile cases where there have been multiple victims, it has been possible for patterns of abuse to be identified by the police, leading to successful identification and prosecution, where individual accusations at a much earlier stage failed. We are facing a crisis of confidence among sexual abuse victims who do not believe there is any prospect of justice within the current system. This is one important reason why they often do not report offences to the police. When they do, there is only a small likelihood of any subsequent investigation resulting in the CPS prosecuting the case. And when prosecution takes place, juries will often return a not-guilty verdict. It is one person's word against another. A technological solution is needed which addresses both of the problems – low reporting and lack of evidence. These together allow thousands of sexual criminals to evade justice.

The Objectives of We-Together - Levering Technology for Justice

The aim of We-Together is to secure a permanent, meaningful increase in the conviction-rate of sexual offenders across the United Kingdom. This will be accomplished by:

- increased reporting by victims;
- increased likelihood of identifying and prosecuting serial perpetrators; leading to
- increased conviction-rate.

We-Together will increase the sexual-offender conviction-rate by introducing a sophisticated, GDPR-compliant, highly secure analytical system. It will allow victims to self-report, independent of the police. All information entered will be securely encrypted to ensure privacy and no personal identifiers will be available to anyone within the charity. This new reporting mechanism – the first of its kind – will use relational database analysis to identify multiple (two or more) victims with the same potential abuser. Once a cluster of victims has been identified the police will be sent contact information allowing them to contact the identified victims. In almost all cases the victims will, at this stage, be unknown to each other. Victims will only be contacted by the police if they are identified as being part of a cluster who have had common features of abuse, e.g., time, place, method of grooming, football coach etc. If the police then contact victims because they are part of a cluster, the victim will know that the abuse they suffered was not directed to them alone but that there were also other victims. This will help overcome some of the reasons for the current state of non-reporting.

When presented with a cluster of victims unknown to each other but with a common identifier it will be easier for the police to investigate successfully. This may also identify less severe offences which may be precursors to a major offence (e.g., the kidnap, rape and murder of Sarah Everard), The amount of corroborating evidence from more than one victim will greatly increase the probability of a case being presented to the CPS and that case being prosecuted. At trial, the testimony of more than one independent victim will be less likely to be undermined by defence counsel. They will also be less able to call into question a victim's character. Trials involving multiple victims are also likely to result in a guilty verdict from a jury as possible prejudicial views will carry much less weight. We-Together will facilitate the work of the CPS in two ways. First, by increasing overall levels of reporting. Second, it will allow currently unlinked cases of serial abuse to be identified, increasing the likelihood of investigation and providing the evidential basis for successful prosecutions to be brought.

The We-Together Technology

Our technological solution is being developed by a specialist ground-breaking Cambridge University-associated IT organisation, building on their current system architecture. Users will enter data via a web-site or app. AI embedded in the system will constantly analyse all newly entered details against those previously entered. Criteria will be analysed and a weighted scoring system used to determine matches indicating a common perpetrator. The analytical systems will also be able to indicate if there are potential malicious entries. The prototype database is almost ready, and a multidisciplinary team is currently developing the front-end. Features such as privacy policies, links to support organisations (We-Together is NOT a support organisation) and details such as a panic button for instant exit are included. Hover boxes offer encouragement and explanation where appropriate. Capacity for audit and research is presumed.

We-Together is beginning to be promoted by social media. In the general media, a national publication has already requested a feature article. We have just this week recruited an actor known on the international stage as our first Ambassador. We will ally ourselves with support organisations and existing services, such as counselling services and GP surgeries. The Metropolitan Police have shown great interest in our project, as has the Office of the Victims Commissioner.

Social Impact – Success Criteria

Being part of a cluster of victims will reduce the feelings of shame, feelings of hopelessness and fear that individuals experience. Knowing that there are other victims will also help to overcome feelings of denial, while in cases of drugging or inebriation, knowing of others will reassure the victim of the accuracy of their memories.

We-together will secure justice for far more victims of sexual crime than is currently the case. This is its primary objective, in relation to which all other potential benefits are secondary. However, although these benefits are secondary, they are not negligible: the broader social impact can be expected to be immense.

First, effective prosecution of perpetrators across the country will ease the already immense strain on mental-health services. Victims are more likely to make a full recovery if they know that the perpetrator has been held accountable. Not only will victims be less at risk of suicide, but overall emotional wellness will be improved, and counselling resources, which are already strained, should, to some extent, be freed up.

Second, an increase in conviction-rates will have a corresponding deterrence effect: potential perpetrators will be far less likely to assume they will get away with it. Potential victims will be safer, and we can expect that the number of victims will decline overall. There should be a shift in culture.

In addition, We-Together, working to support the work of the police, should help strengthen public confidence in their ability to act in sexual offence cases. This is particularly relevant at the present, when the reputation of the police services in the UK, particularly in relation to their commitment to the safety of women, is at an all-time low.

Date of establishment and first trustees appointed

The charity was established on 19 March 2019 when the founding trustees were appointed. Limited activity took place in the two years after that because of the pandemic.

Trustees

Alison Benge, Founding Trustee and Secretary to the Board (Appointed 19 March 2019)

Geoff Benge, Founding Trustee and Treasurer (Appointed 19 March 2019)

James Kidwell, Chairman (Appointed 14 January 2022)

Dr Judith Miller, Trustee responsible for co-ordinating external advisors and support network (Appointed 19 March 2019)

Dean Nicholson, Trustee responsible for diversity

Perry Power, Trustee responsible for the Charity's Social Media presence (Appointed 6 September 2022)

Trustee Board and Governance

The Trustee Board is the governing body of the charity and will be responsible for taking all major decisions affecting the direction and control of the charity.

Matters requiring the consultation and approval of all Trustees are as follows:

- Appointment and removal of trustees
- Appointment of advisors and ambassadors
- The Annual accounts of the charity
- The Budget forecast of the charity
- The policies of the Charity (e.g. Safeguarding)
- Any significant items of expenditure or commitments (e.g financial leases)
- Any significant publicity statements

Trustee Board meetings

The Trustee Board aims to meet at least once per month. Meetings may take place by means of a conference or video call.

The secretary will send all trustees an agenda prior to each meeting and will prepare brief minutes of the meeting which reflect the actions agreed and decisions taken at the meeting.

From time to time the Board may delegate responsibility to an individual or a smaller working party to complete a task (e.g. Social media, marketing material, meetings with advisors).

Financial management

The charity is run on the basis that all trustees and advisors are providing their services pro bono. Reasonable expenses incurred on behalf of the charity will be reimbursed.

The charity expects to incur capital expenditure in respect of the construction of the database – for which Kynesim (a software development company, based in Cambridge) have been instructed to commence work, initially on a pro-bono basis, although this will change as and when funding permits.

The charity expects to incur operating expenses in relation to database hosting, web site maintenance, professional services in relation to accounting and registration, promotion (social media and other), appropriate insurances and the cost of holding meetings.

As part of its fundraising initiatives, the charity has set up a GoFundMe account which aims to crowdfund part of its operating cost requirement. It is also the mechanism through which visitors to the web site may contribute.

The Chairman and Treasurer are empowered to approve and pay all day-to-day expenditures.

Other information pertaining to the charity

Registered address: 6 Queens Road, Enfield, Middlesex, EN1 1NE

Web site: <https://we-together.co.uk/>

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/we-togetheruk/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/wetogetheruk/>

Email: info@we-together.co.uk

GoFundMe: We-Together

Bankers: Lloyds Bank

We- Together (Registered charity number 1196883)

Financial Statements for the period from inception to 31 March 2023

The Financial Statements are prepared on the basis of the Statement of Recognised Practice (SORP) for smaller charities.

Receipts and payments account

	Unrestricted	Total
	Funds	Funds
	£	£
Receipts		
Voluntary receipts	8,049	8,049
Total receipts	8,049	8,049
Payments		
Governance and administrative expenses	1,045	1,045
Promotional material costs	388	388
Web site registration	70	70
Total payments	1,503	1,503
Excess of receipts over payments	6,546	6,546
Bank account balance as at 31 March 2023	6,546	6,546

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

	Unrestricted	Total
	Funds	Funds
	£	£
Cash Funds		
Bank current account	6,546	6,546
Total assets	6,546	6,546
Liabilities	-	-
Net assets available to the charity	6,546	6,546